

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION**

CHERI LABLANCHE,	§	
	§	
PLAINTIFF,	§	
	§	
V.	§	
	§	
	§	
NATIONAL BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS – (NBME), FEDERATION OF STATE MEDICAL BOARDS – (FSMB), EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION FOR FOREIGN MEDICAL GRADUATES – (ECFMG)	§	CIVIL ACTION NO. 4:13-CV-00204
	§	
	§	
	§	
	§	
	§	
DEFENDANTS.	§	
	§	

**DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR CONTINUANCE OF THE RULE 16 CONFERENCE
AND OTHER DEADLINES**

Defendants National Board of Medical Examiners (“NBME”), Federation of State Medical Boards (“FSMB”), and Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (“ECFMG”) (collectively, “Defendants”) file this Motion for Continuance of the Rule 16 Conference and Other Deadlines (“Motion”), and would respectfully show this Court as follows:

1. Plaintiff filed this lawsuit on January 25, 2013. On January 28, this Court issued an Order for Conference and Disclosure of Interested Parties (“Order”). That Order scheduled an initial pretrial and scheduling conference for May 17, 2013; directed the parties to confer pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(f); and ordered that the parties prepare and file a joint discovery/case management plan by May 7, 2013. Because of the reasons set forth below, those dates cannot be achieved.

2. Although Plaintiff filed this lawsuit on January 25, 2013, Plaintiff to date has failed to properly effect service of process on any Defendant in this case. Contemporaneously

with the filing of this Motion, Defendants file a Rule 12(b)(5) Motion to Dismiss, or for More Definite Statement Pursuant to Rule 12(e) (the “Rule 12 Motions”). Defendants incorporate by reference the arguments set forth in the Rule 12 Motions.

3. In light of the Plaintiff’s failure to properly serve Defendants, the scheduling conference and its associated deadlines are not appropriate at this time. Indeed, Rule 16 contemplates the issuance of a scheduling order only after a defendant has been served with process or has made an appearance in the case. *See Fed. R. Civ. P. 16(b)(2)* (“The judge must issue the scheduling order as soon as practicable, but in any event within the earlier of 120 days after any defendant has been served with the complaint or 90 days after any defendant has appeared.”).

4. Further, as noted in the Rule 12 Motions, Plaintiff’s Complaint requires a more definite statement because it fails to identify any cognizable legal basis supporting Plaintiff’s claims. The value of a discovery conference and case management plan are thus diminished unless Defendants are availed the opportunity to fully-assess the legal rights Plaintiff purports to possess. Only then can Defendants determine what discovery is needed to refute Plaintiff’s claims.

5. Similarly, as pleaded Plaintiff’s Complaint creates uncertainty regarding whether this Court has subject-matter jurisdiction over these claims. Resolving the jurisdiction issue at the outset potentially could save the parties from allocating unnecessary time, resources, and money to develop the discovery plan in this case.

6. If granted, the Rule 12 Motions could resolve the foregoing issues and could potentially dispose of this case in its entirety before proceeding to the requirements of Rule 16 and Rule 26.

7. Defendants therefore respectfully request that this Court postpone the Rule 16 conference and associated deadlines until such time as the Court has ruled on Defendants' Rule 12 Motions.

Respectfully submitted,

FULBRIGHT & JAWORSKI L.L.P.

By: /s/ Alaina King Benford

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**Counsel for Defendant National Board of
Medical Examiners, Federation of State
Medical Boards, and Educational Commission
for Foreign Medical Graduates**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the May 7, 2013, a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing Defendants' Motion for Continuance of the Rule 16 Conference and Other Deadlines was filed using the Court's Electronic Filing System and that service on known Filing Users, including Plaintiff noted below, will be accomplished through certified mail and/or electronic transmission.

Cheri LaBlanche
12806 Southspring Drive
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By: /s/ Peter C. Tipps
Peter C. Tipps

CERTIFICATE OF CONFERENCE

I hereby certify that on the May 7, 2013, the parties conferred via telephone regarding the substance of this Motion for Continuance of the Rule 16 Conference and Other Deadlines. Plaintiff stated that she agreed to postponing the joint discovery/case management plan filing deadline, but that she did not have time to review the motion or indicate her consent in writing.

By: /s/ Peter C. Tipps
Peter C. Tipps